



Philanthropy Stories

J.D. Spinner

Jean Hower Taber provided the single largest gift in The University of Akron's history and changed the face of the institution. Sharing more than \$20 million in her lifetime, Jean Hower Taber, longtime community advocate and friend, strengthened student assistance and academic performance for generations to come. Her seismic 2017 gift supports honors scholarships, audiology, and maintenance of Hower House. To mark Mrs. Taber's generosity, the Jean Hower Taber Student Center was named in her honor.

Pam and Gary Williams both graduated from The University of Akron in 1968 and have been generous supporters

ever since. Their historic 2016 gift establishing the renamed Williams Honors College advances a wide array of initiatives. It elevates the already rigorous Honors College experience and helps our students to graduate with a global mindset and a commitment to inclusivity that brings solutions into sharper focus.

A \$3.5 million gift from Drs. Nicholas and Dorothy Cummings in 2014 elevated The University of Akron's reputation as the nation's premiere repository for the history of psychology. The Cummings Center for the History of Psychology draws historians, writers, and students worldwide to the preeminent national clearinghouse and protector of irreplaceable artifacts. It collects, preserves, and makes available primary source material on the history of psychology.

The GAR Foundation has been a close funding partner including capital gifts, endowed chairs in Chemistry, Arts and Sciences, and scholarships. Two examples of their commitment to student success are the Rising to the Occasion Scholarship, which funded African American male students for the duration of the baccalaureate program, and the prestigious Buckingham Endowed Scholarship, awarded to top performing students.

The John S. and James L. Knight Foundation W. Gerald Austen Endowed Chair in Polymer Science and Polymer Engineering solidifies the University's distinction as a leading destination for the research on advanced materials with medical applications. The progressive work of the Endowed

Chair builds on the historic legacy of Akron as once the world's rubber capital. Further research encompassing synthetic rubber and later polymer research has cemented the institution's place as a research leader.

The Gary L. and Karen S. Taylor Institute for Direct Marketing was established at the University in 2003 with a major gift from alumni Gary and Karen Taylor. The Institute was founded to educate undergraduate and MBA students in the specialized ideas, issues, and techniques of Direct/Interactive Marketing. The Taylors also visibly altered the face of Akron and the University campus skyline with their altruistic contribution to the University's on-campus football stadium, subsequently named InfoCision Stadium. The Taylors lead gift to sponsor the on-campus stadium in 2009 symbolized the resurgence of Zips Athletics, coming from the historic Rubber Bowl into a dazzling new facility, ushering in a new era of Zip athletics.

Goodyear Tire and Rubber Company, a magnanimous community leader and champion of Akron, has been a steadfast University partner. A leader in the Challenge 70 capital campaign which built the E. J. Thomas Performing Arts Hall, as well as provided renovation support, Goodyear's historic scholarship support includes Goodyear's Chair in Intellectual Property and Professorship of Rubber Science, both monumental advancements for the University. A \$3 million gift in 1998 to help recruit polymer science and engineering professors resulted in The University of Akron renaming its

Polymer Science Building, the Goodyear Polymer Center.

The Margaret Clark Morgan Foundation, now known as Peg's Foundation, provided more than \$2.1 million in 2007 to establish an endowed directorship for the National Museum of Psychology. A longtime charitable partner with The University of Akron, Peg's Foundation educates the public on issues promoting mental health and the prevention of mental illness.

Alumna Mary Schiller Myers' expansive devotion to the arts impacted and influenced her life and affiliations. Along with her husband, Louis, she established scholarships in dance, art, and music, continuing her remarkable University of Akron support for many years. She was a benefactor to the Mary Schiller Myers School of Art, which the University's trustees named in her honor in 1997, as well as the Mary Schiller Myers Lecture Series. The Myers School was the second school named in honor of a donor, following the 1991 naming of the College of Business Administration's George W. Daverio School of Accountancy.

The largesse of Mrs. Kathleen Coleman and her late husband, Les, established the University's central location: Coleman Common, a verdant green space daily drawing students to its open lawn amphitheater, terraces, and labyrinth. The 2007 Common gift joins a long list of contributions by the Colemans, including The Les and Kathleen Coleman Endowed Chair in Chemistry. This gift stands in tribute to Mr. Coleman, a '52 University of Akron graduate and former

chairman of Lubrizol Corp.

Building on a relationship forged years earlier, the New York-based Herman Muehlstein Foundation has given books and rare collections to The University of Akron. This includes the remainder of Mr. Muehlstein's treasured collection, now housed in the Herman Muehlstein Rare Book Room in the University library. Additionally, the Foundation established The Herman Muehlstein Fund for Scholastic Aid, offering scholarships to University of Akron students from the New York area.

The story of LeBron James' meteoric rise is known internationally. But the Akron legend's personal tenacity and athletic skill led to a 2015 partnership with The University of Akron to raise the dreams and expectations of many more. The renaming of the LeBron James Family Foundation College of Education is part of a dynamic association between the University and foundation offering free, four-year college educations to the foundation's I PROMISE students.